Fellowship in Prayer

"For a world united in prayer"

"Let peace encircle all the world,
Let men walk hand in hand,
A living bond of brotherhood,
A voice from land to land."

Volume IV December 1953 Number 6

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FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER
(Incorporated)
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Volume IV December 1953 Number 6

THE LIGHT OF CHRISTMAS

The light of Christmas is a glorious fact. Christmas is pre-eminently the festival of light. Nature contributes by lengthening the light of day and reducing the darkness of night. Man contributes artifical light of every color, shape and size.

Cathedrals glow in soft candle light as do stately churches and lowly chapels. Homes, streets, and shops are bedecked with strings, clusters, and rows of lights.

The beggar, the banker, and the builder feast their eyes upon the lights of Christmas until their hearts are full of joy and their faces radiate a friendly glow.

* * *

But man stands in the shadow. He stands in need of light. Man who destroys must build again. Man who hates must love again. Man who plants so much sorrow must plant again the seeds of joy, gladness and goodwill. The only light by which some can walk is the light in us.

* * *

The birth of Jesus was accompanied by a great outshining of celestial light. A bright and radiant star appeared to the wise men in the East to indicate the long awaited time had come.

The shepherds in the fields about Bethlehem were keeping their flocks by night when suddenly they were engulfed in a blaze of light. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men."

The One who understood the darkness of His day and who understands the darkness of our day comes to us at this holy holiday to say again "I am the light of the world."

When will the great hosts of humanity join with Him to make real--"Peace and goodwill?"

"By the glow of the Christmas Candle
With its constant, lovely cheer,
May you find your way through this Season
Into a bright New Year!"

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LET EACH WITHIN HIS HEART A TEMPLE BUILD WHERE NO MAN IS A STRANGER - *Sarobyn*

By Sara Robbins

These words are dedicated to the United Nations devotees. The saints, the prophets, the apostles who nourish the vision of tomorrow . . . 'That no man is a stranger.'

At the busy United Nations headquarters, a new year is now on the threshold. Physically it is a place, a house, an institution . . . yet it is not that at all. It is a soul. A soul dispensing both the sweet and bitter medicine to heal the sick world, to lift the tired and weary human family upon another plateau.

Let no man be a stranger . . . is the world-wide prayer. Eyes are watching, eager ears are listening. The heart yearns for signs of good will and peaceable settlements. The true lovers of peace everywhere, regardless of color, race, religion or geography, look wistfully to the U.N. for solace and direction. They pray earnestly that they who make decisions for others may be divinely guided and wisely led. For these are times of spiritual tensions, of challenging fears and convulsive panics. And they that watch know they are at the mercy of the spawn of a great sorcerer . . . for good or for evil.

History, speaking from the past, tells us that every few thousand years, more or less, there is a great processing of souls. . . and 'To every man there openeth a highway and a low. . .' and men of God must prove if they are with Him or against Him. Thus many are called and few are chosen. On the shoulders of these few rests a future, sacred or profane.

For centuries life has been pregnant with a new era . . . A dream of a world . . . where no man is a stranger . . . Through the centuries this dream has suffered with travail and labor awaiting the appointed time to open its heart and deliver the NEW AGE. In olden times great prophets arose to remind the people that God's plan will be revealed. The prophets, saints and apostles . . . they came on a special ordained errand for the Lord . . . people listened and were led. . . the plan unfolded slowly, gradually, always a little higher, a little more evolved. Today our cry might well be-- *Oh Lord give us great men with large hearts -- make strong these chosen few . . . these shall be our prophets, saints*

and apostles . . . let them remind us again and again . . . that the souls of men are one.

In some great book we read . . . the best preacher is the heart, the best teacher is time, the best book is the world, the best friend is God. Some of us are weary of the way brotherhood is bought, sold, bartered and exchanged by the glib tongue and the slippery attitudes. Little wonder. Each group has a remedy, each nation a method, each political factor its own terms, each law its own convictions, and each man his own prejudice. At least, it strikes at our apathy, stirs the smug and the lethargic. We are forced to think a little. It is not yet time to say if and what the U. N. is accomplishing. So much energy is spent long before its members reach the important concerns. We, the outsiders, dare not judge. The organization is intricate and complicated and still in its crawling stages. We put our faith in the loyal few who stand by in holy obedience for a great cause and a great need. They salvage the crumbs. They stir the concoction of a new and yet unflavored broth to feed the sick and the famished. What is in the broth is not as important as what is left out. We have need of that certain spiritual ingredient . . . that love . . . the love and compassion that knows that to God and the godly . . . no man is a stranger.

Quoting Confucius . . . "I shall not be grieved if other men do not know me, but much grieved if I do not know other men". . . In this we are all guilty. . . We talk so much. . . we forget to *BE*. Lord, it's not what happens to me, but what happens to others because of me.

Right now, we are sadly in need of the prophets, the saints and the apostles . . . Where shall we find them? How many are sitting at the U.N. tables forging the destiny of nations and people? . . . Yes, let him be an industrialist, a politician, an artist, a law maker . . . IF HE IS WITH GOD . . . then he is with the people. Will he go all the way? Will he speak with the courage of the apostle, the wisdom of the saint? Will he hold the vision of the prophet? Will he dare to be bold enough to speak the truth and disregard the opinion of men and mice? If he knows he is the mouthpiece of God, he will fight with love, not hate . . . and go all the way. Will he?

The disciple of the new age is the spiritual cement of the

U. N. He comes with God. He walks with God. He works with God. He knows too well the sacred alternatives. A lasting peace or no peace. One world or no world. The brotherhood of man or no man. This is the atomic warning . . . A warning no one can overlook. It calls forth the purest motives. It compels the divine to be born, to be born quickly . . . born NOW.

WATCH . . . all ye children of the Light. This is your opportunity to prove where you stand . . . with Him or against Him . . . Oh let us each a temple build . . . where no man is a stranger.

(By courtesy of ASIA CALLING
Observed by Dorothy G. Anderson)

oooOooo

LISTEN, A LIGHT!

We have done almost everything
With the Christmas story,
Even though inexhaustible
Remains its glory.

There would seem to be little more
In song that can be wrought;
So let the Night really be Silent,
And we - do nought.

Let our incessant tongues
Be still a while this season;
One thing only let us do,
And that is - listen.

Not for the herald angels;
Only to the oracular,
Sheer though inaudible,
Pleading of His star.

--A. E. Johnson.

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CREATIVE SILENCE

By Mildred Long

Out of the silence of an empty void God released His creative power and flung the universe into motion.

In the silence of the mother's womb a new life is nurtured and matured for birth.

The seed lies buried in the soundless heart of a lump of soil until new growth is ready to spring forth.

God does His creative work in the silence. God speaks His truths to men in the silence. The silent years of the life of Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist and Paul were the years of preparation for great and momentous endeavor. When God has a great task to be performed and needs a mighty man for His messenger, He calls someone who has a capacity for silence and a willingness to leave the crowd and live for a time in solitude.

Solitude enlarges the heart's capacities, increases the vision, purifies the purpose, steadies the nerves, establishes steadfastness and courage, and brings the human spirit into harmony with the Divine Spirit. Solitude is the cradle of greatness.

It was on a still night in the quiet hills of Bethlehem that God sent forth His matchless message through an angel's voice: "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy . . . For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." And out of the silence of that winter night the angel chorus sang to the eager hearts of the shepherds: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will to men."

In the quiet humility of a cattle's stall Jesus came into the world. Away from the noise of a busy city and the crowded Inn Jesus was ushered into this world of confusion in an atmosphere of peace and quietude.

Most of the years of Jesus' life on earth were silent years. The superb truths of God's perfect will and supreme love were woven into the very fibre of His being during those silent years, so that He entered His public ministry with a clear vision and an invincible spirit. Nothing in man, or in the powers of government, or in the subtleties of Satan could intimidate such a spirit. Born in obscurity, nurtured in solitude, taught by the Spirit of God within His heart, He was

thus equipped to become the Saviour of mankind.

Christmas comesto the world to commemorate this silence. There is a reason for man's desire for a white Christmas. And that reason is buried deep in this innate longing for peace and quietness. Christmas is most meaningful to those who carry quiet places in their hearts.

When God's beautiful blanket of snow covers and glorifies all the ugly shapes of backyards and alleys, when transportation is delayed and people seek the refuge of the warm hearthside, there falls with the snow a certain indefinable quietness upon the heart of man.

Jesus comes to us in the silent watches of the night, in the aloneness of the wilderness temptation, in the solitude of the soul's Gethsemane, and out of that silence there issues upon the waiting ear the song of angels and the promise of victory.

Silence dedicated to God gives birth to joy and strength. In the silence of the soul of man, hope springs eternal, faith blossoms into realization, and love transcends all that is human or earthly. Silence is the cradle of God's creative power.

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PRAYER is real because, at its highest, it comes back from its explorations freighted with original ideas that emerge in loftiest action. And an idea so received may fruit in a poem, a painting, or statue, an invention, a new institution or system, or a solution to a problem of conduct. And akin to this power or origination is the gift of appreciation for beauty, goodness, and truth which prayer also awakens

The fact that the God of all the races and tongues does not speak to us in words, but in the language of reality, in what is back of words, gives the clue to the proper method in praying. Real prayer is in what happens to desire, will and imagination. Desire, united to the creative factor of the universe, creates.

(From WE PRAY THEE, LORD
-By Roy Wallace Thomas)

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S W I T Z E R L A N D

For six hundred sixty-two years, Switzerland has been at peace with the world. Beset on all sides with terrific pressures, still she has always maintained her neutrality. It is all the more noteworthy that a nation composed of such different linguistic, cultural and religious groups, *CAN* live together in perfect harmony. The Swiss give credit for this achievement when a league was formed of three cantons around Lake Lucerne in 1291. The Charter read as follows:

" In the Name of God, Amen. WE, the people of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden, considering the evil times that are upon us and the better to protect and defend ourselves, swear upon oath to aid and succour one another mutually with our deeds and counsel, with our strong right arm and earthly goods, with all our might and soul, against each and all who do us hurt and wrong. With one voice do we swear and promise not to tolerate in our valleys the dominion of foreign overlords. None of us shall do harm unto a comrade whether to his body or to his possessions. He amongst us who shall be judged blameworthy shall repair his wrongdoings. Should discord arise between Confederates then shall our elders foregather and act as mediators. This our Covenant is drawn up for the good of all and shall, with God's help, endure for ever. Delivered in the year of Our Lord one thousand two hundred and ninety one in the beginning of the month of August."

Every year, on the night of August 1st, the National Day of Switzerland, from one end of the country to the other, in the valleys and on the mountain peaks where the Alpine horn resounds so harmoniously, bonfires are lit around which gather the dwellers of towns and villages. The parson or a local magistrate reads in solemn tones the Federal Pack of August 1st, 1291, by which the founders of the Swiss Confederation swore to unite their strength in order to defend their liberty. Thus, after 650 years, to the town-dweller of Geneva, who speaks French and is Protestant in belief, is brought the realization of the fundamental ideal which unites him to his catholic and Romanche-speaking brother of the Grisons. That is the link which welds together this multiple diversity of language, race, culture and religion and out of these creates the harmonious whole of the Swiss Confederation.

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THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

By Grenville Kleiser

Thomas Carlyle was six years old when an aged man came to the house to beg. The boy Thomas was alone in the big house.

His heart was touched by the old man's appeal, so he went to his own little penny bank and gave the entire contents.

In looking back upon that act when he had become a famous writer, Carlyle said, "I never knew anything that gave me so much pleasure."

The Christmas spirit and sense of service should be a perennial expression of love in the heart.

If the spirit of good cheer and unselfishness of Christmas time were generally manifested throughout the year it would transform mankind.

Love is still the greatest thing in the world. Divine love is the remedy for the world's wants, wars, and woes. It is the handservant of faith, mercy, and good deeds.

Acquire the giving habit. Give intelligently, freely, liberally. Give money, books, counsel, sympathy, and inspiration. Give something every day. Cultivate the giving habit as you do the saving habit. Give out of the fullness of your heart, with no expectation of return or gratitude.

There is no greater joy in life than to render happiness to others by means of intelligent giving. It is the spirit of the Supreme Giver, the Christ who gave His life that men might know the way to the Father.

As we sow we shall reap. Unselfish service, hardship, self-denial--these are tests of a man's real character.

Gratitude means a contented spirit, a kind and loving disposition. It means charity and humility and a generous appreciation of others.

We are told that he is greatest who serves, who submits to the guidance of truth, to the will of God.

Few persons attain this high standard. The desire to be publicly prominent, to amass a fortune, to exalt self, is common to mankind.

Selfish self-seeking is an ugly trait, fraught with disappointment and ultimate disillusionment.

The supreme example of selflessness, of true humility, is Christ, of whom Phillips Brooks said: "I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and

all the navies that were ever built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of men upon the earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life."

"It is more blessed to give than to receive."

oooOooo

A PRAYER

O Love, be Thou my life,
My need, my prayer
To feel Thy Presence
Everywhere.

Be Thou my strength alone
To face each hour,
Steadfast to do Thy Will
To trust Thy Power.

Be Thou my silence
And my deep content,
Rest me secure
In Thy pure intent.

Be Thou my presentness,
Each moment Thine,
Nor time, nor tide dispel
The Hope Sublime.

Of life transformed,
From self set free.
O Love, be Thou
My Eternity."

--Mabel C. Burlingham.

oooOooo

A T T A I N M E N T

To find REALITY in a world of illusion;
To find TRANQUILITY in a world of confusion;
To find PEACE in a world of strife;
To find CHRIST--"THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE."

--Harry Halsey Starrett.

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CHRISTMAS BELLS

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men!

I thought how, as the day had come,
The Belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along the unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said,
"For hate is strong, and mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good will to men."

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep,
"God is not dead, nor doth he sleep!
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,
With peace on earth, good will to men!"

Till, ringing, winging on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime,
Of peace on earth, good will to men!

--Longfellow.

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P R A Y E R:

Father in Heaven, we thank Thee for the return of the Christmas season that brings joy and gladness into our jaded and troubled hearts. In a world darkened by hate, we thank Thee for the eternal light of good will. In a world, like that tavern in Bethlehem of long ago, crowded with things that matter little, we thank Thee for the continued presence of Him who matters much. And in a world where godlessness is rampant, we thank Thee for Emmanuel--God with us--revealed in Jesus Christ. Amen.

--Robert Wells Youngs, D. D.

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"RE-THINKING MISSIONS"

This book was referred to by Dr. William Ernest Hocking in the article appearing in our October number, and would stand reviewing in the light of developments in the Orient. Containing the findings of the Commission of Appraisal, which visited the Orient under the leadership of Dr. Hocking, and at the behest of the Laymen's Foreign Missionary Inquiry, it represents a report on actual conditions as found by a group of highly trained sympathetic people.

Within the past three years, many people have asked why present conditions in China should have developed in the face of vast outlays of money from abroad for educational, religious and cultural purposes. One answer may well lie within the pages of RE-THINKING MISSIONS. For instance, who can tell the differences which might have developed had there been, from the beginning of mission work, a recognition of indigeous spiritual values upon which to build. Some did and found new channels of approach and development.

Of course, when this report first appeared, there was a wave of protest from entrenched interests. Much was said in defense of the "old" whereas no real values in the "old" were brought under criticism. The survey was instituted to analyze the work as conducted, and make recommendations toward its improvement, in the light of changing world conditions. Each reader can determine the need for such a survey considering that, in the meantime, World War II has been fought and Korea is still a question; while here in America we are beginning to awake to the dangers of materialism. It is fair to say that the findings of the Commission, while it brought about numerous changes, in the conduct of missionary activity in the Orient, releasing and heartening much forward-looking work, could not swiftly enough re-orient the entire picture.

It was our original purpose to present to our readers an abridgment of Chapter II, "Christianity, Other Religions and Non-Religion." Such procedure, however, appeared to dull the thinking actuating the chapter. We are, therefore, presenting the entire chapter in instalments. This is done, of course, with the permission of Dr. Hocking, Chairman of the Commission, as well as Harper and Brothers, Publishers. The first instalment follows.

CHRISTIANITY, OTHER RELIGIONS AND NON-RELIGION

At the beginning of our century of Protestant missions, Christianity found itself addressing men attached to other religions: its argument was with these religions. At present, it confronts a growing number of persons, especially among the thoughtful, critical of or hostile to all religion. Its further argument, we judge, is to be less with Islam or Hinduism or Buddhism than with materialism, secularism, naturalism. The growth of this third factor, non-religion, alters the relation of the other two: Christianity and the environing religions face at the same moment the same menace, the spread of the secular spirit; the former opponents have become to this extent allied by the common task. It is not surprising if our missions find this realignment difficult, perhaps embarrassing; it compels a thorough re-analysis of the purpose of missions in reference to other faiths. Let us first note how this situation has come about.

Growth Within the Mission. In returning, much altered in aspect, to the continent of its origin, Christianity was not approaching lands barren of religion. They were lands, not alone the ancient birthplace of great religions, but until recent times, sources of new religious movements. In all of them to this day religion is naturally a theme of ordinary conversation, the devotion of lives to religion usual and honored, the willing acceptance of privation and suffering in pursuit of religious experience prevalent. The very multiplicity of gods, temples, places of pilgrimage, observances, might serve as a rough index of the large place of religious themes in the daily life of these peoples. Their backwardness in terms of science and its applications was due in no small part to this preoccupation. Our own type of civilization, when oriental peoples came to know it, appeared to them as material and secular in comparison. They were, like the Athenians whom Paul addressed, "very religious" and in much the same sense.

Our missionaries did not at first approach them with the Pauline tact or understanding, by picking up the thread of their religious quest, and carrying it on to a further stage. They were repelled by the external strangeness, the plural gods, the idols, the devious elements of superstition, fear,

baseness, priestly corruption. If there was a lotus arising from the slime, they were not sensitized to perceive it -- that was not their business. It was their defined charge to win souls from this context to a new discipleship, and to create a church.

Their attitude had all the strength of single-mindedness and clear-cut challenge; it saved a quantity of toil in examining the precise nature of the situation from which men were being rescued. It was sufficient to be sure of one's own ground without cumbering one's mind with the endless variety of error into which uninspired human ingenuity could stray. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." presumably also a transplantable creature whose best attitude to his own past is a clean breach. It was advisable, at times imperative, to remove the convert to the mission compound, where he could be protected from molestation, and where his habits could be remade from the ground up, on the pattern of the western-Christian modes of living.

This clean-breach method, experience has now amply shown mistaken. Its uncompromising attitude toward local tradition: social scheme, religion, required herosim in the convert and found its heroes. But its cost in human suffering was like the cost of mediaeval surgery, and its results were mixed with failure. It was a cruel pedagogy, which required pruning down to the stalk the earlier growths of the spirit, and checking the momentum of an ancient current of life. If a new idea is to take sturdy root it should make a maximum use of whatever kindred ideas have been there before: the life that begins with an amputation can seldom reach full vigor. Further, the dependence on the mission produced by this system could hardly be overcome. For the made-over individual was out of working relation with the rest of society. The mission was forced to assume some responsibility for his livelihood and even for his marriage within the Christian group. The position of these uprooted Christians was the more unhappy since their tutors in the faith were seldom inclined to admit them to social equality. They were commonly brought from the lower walks of their own society into a new self-respect; but with this came also a new subordination, inconsistent with the growth of leadership. The missions have gone far in reading these lessons and in revising their procedure.

But the central lesson they were slower to read, though they might have been led to it by their own faith that God has not anywhere left himself without a witness. It was hard for the missions to mix with their absorbing interest in rebirth a practical recognition that the surrounding religions were religions, and as such were ways to God. Their very compassion led them to hold these "false" religions responsible for the defects of oriental society and custom, the counterpart of an equally hasty social theory which made Christianity responsible for all the advantages they felt in western life. Nevertheless, this same humanity of spirit was bound in time to make its own observations: there was the genuine piety of many a soul around them, and an occasional life of distinguished spiritual quality whose sources were worthy of consideration and respect. The conviction makes its way that here also there must be something to build upon, and something to understand, if one is to speak to the soul of Asia.

But further, the mission is impelled by the requirements of simple truth. For after all, "we *are* brothers in a common quest, and the first step is to recognize it, and disarm ourselves of our prejudices." It is a matter of truth: not because the assertion of likeness, where likeness exists, is any truer than the assertion of the difference that also exists. But because, having, by long habit, been dwelling on points of contrast, the mission requires a special leaning to reach the point of justice. Moreover, it takes a determined effort, armed both with sympathy and with analysis, to see through the diversities of language, of symbol, of observance, to the identities of meaning. This effort has long been incumbent upon us: it speaks but sadly for the candor and perspicacity of this present religious age that these barriers of expression, all but banished in the scientific unity of mankind, should still hold kindred spirits apart in the field of religion.

(To be continued next issue)

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A good conscience is a continuous Christmas.

--Franklin.

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A TRIBUTE TO GRENVILLE KLEISER

By Harry Halsey Starrett

Death is not a loss but a gain; death is a beautiful transition from illusion to REALITY; from the finite to The Infinite; from the temporal to the Eternal; from turmoil to tranquility; from strife to PEACE. Death is a time for rejoicing and thanksgiving rather than a time for sorrow and mourning. To mourn the passing of a departed Soul is to challenge the wisdom, the justice and the mercy of Almighty God, "in whom we live and move and have our being."

Grenville Kleiser served his mission here on earth in accordance with the Divine Plan and he served it well. By Divine decree, he was removed from our midst into the Invisible Realm of ineffable bliss. Let our minds be more concerned with his gain than with our own loss.

By the grace of God, Grenville Kleiser was chosen as the channel of the word, the love, the light, the life, the wisdom, the sustaining grace of Almighty God; he was, verily, a good and faithful servant. He bequeathed to posterity an estate of incalculable worth; an estate measured in spiritual values, entirely outside of the realm and the reach of material values. The good he did as he journeyed along life's highway, will stand forever, as a monument far greater than any monument posterity could possibly erect to his memory out of stone and mortar.

While Grenville will not be with us in the flesh, his immortal spirit will abide with us always as an inspiration and a help in our struggle for the emancipation of the world from the forces of destruction, which are rampant today.

Instead of mourning the loss of our beloved, let us rather give thanks to God that He blessed us with that beautiful fellowship and that He allowed us to have Grenville Kleiser with us as long as He did. I am sure we will feel Grenville Kleiser's presence and uplifting, and sustaining influence just as much, as time goes on, as we did when he was with us in person.

Let us rejoice and give thanks that our God is a Just and Merciful God and let us express our gratitude by striving to do His will and, in all things, to glorify Him.

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THE ST. LOUIS CHRISTMAS CAROLERS

Christmas carols have been a feature of the Yuletide celebration in St. Louis, Missouri for many years. The ancient custom was revived there in 1909 by groups of people who enjoyed singing carols for the mere pleasure. A group would decide to go caroling, set out on a Christmas Eve and sing to any one who cared to listen. More singers joined, wider areas were covered and a spirit of genuine good will prevailed. It created a spontaneous wish to give, on the part of many listeners, and the carolers found themselves recipients of many unsolicited gifts.

The age-old custom of putting a lighted candle in the window on Christmas Eve to welcome the Christ Child, spread even wider with the development of the St. Louis Carolers. Still more singing groups joined until now well over thirty thousand singers volunteer their servicds.

Organized groups sing as units. Protestant and Catholic churches send their choirs and Glee Clubs, school choruses, Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, Girl Scouts, Brownies, Salvation Army, YMCA, YWCA, Negro churches also remain as units in themselves. There are even kindergarten singers. Individuals also volunteer and form singing units, the total of all groups now reaching more than a thousand.

Each choir is assigned a territory and there is no duplication or over-laping.

In 1909, Miss Bertha Phillips, now Mrs. John Lawson of Boston, saw the great need of ministering to the underprivileged children of St. Louis, and with the help of others, organized the St. Louis Children's Society. She also saw the opportunity for the use of the voluntary offerings given to the Carolers, and thus, in 1911, the caroling was sponsored by the Children's Aid Society. The growth of the movement demanded a permanent organization and in 1924, the present St. Louis Christmas Carols Association was incorporated with Mr. Wm. H. Danforth as president.

Mr. Wm. H. Danforth is Chairman of the Board of the Ralston Purina Company, President of the American Youth Foundation, and the Danforth Foundation, which he established. In and around St. Louis, however, from October through January, Mr. Danforth is known as the city's number one caroler.

Beginning October first, the organization goes into high gear, carefully planning the singing for each year. The object is to cover the entire city and county, block by block. The choirs and chorus groups register with the office where a detailed map is divided into zones according to the number of groups volunteering. Each group has a costumed leader responsible to the Association who sees to it that instructions are followed, the assigned routes covered, and all collections are returned to the central office. The Association office secures carol song books and legal permits, provides proper identification buttons and other details, as well as stimulating general interest. The great success of the undertaking stems largely from the untiring interest and effort of Mr. Danforth and Mrs. Toma. The collections, which now amount to more than $30,000 annually are turned over to fifty children's organizations which form a part of the sommunity fund.

Christmas Carols belong to everybody. Consequently creeds and color form no barriet for those who sing, or for those who share in the money collected. As stated by the association, "Just as all creeds and colors sing these beautiful carols, so do all creeds and colors receive the benefits of the Christmas Carols Association."

As the winter afternoon turns to dusk on Christmas Eve this year, lighted candles will begin appearing here and there. Up one street and down the next, one will see rows of homes, each with a candle gleaming in the window. In homes of rich and poor, high and low, candles will bear the message--the genial invitation and expression of hospitality to carolers who come with their proclamation of peace and good will. And as the voices of over thirty thousand singers in all parts of the city and county of St. Louis echo through the quiet winter night, who can measure the Christmas joy they bring to themselves and to others?

Assuredly, at the close of the evening the world has been made a little richer in kindness, in good will, in brotherly love; a happier place in which to live.

May the custom of Christmas caroling spread far and wide throughout our land.

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WHAT CHRISTMAS MEANS TO ME

By George William Wright

We brought home our first born and placed her tiny form in the little bed prepared in what was to be her home and ours. We stood in a silence reverently looking down upon the baby form. Why was it we said, "Does it not seem as though a something holy and beyond understanding is here in the room?"

It did. It was the wonderful mystery of new entering life, again throwing its spell over the soul. Ten thousand times ten thousand has it been repeated in human experience and yet it remains as great a wonder and as a deep mystery as at the first. When we awoke in the night the sense of a new presence in the room was upon us. But the experience was altogether disproportionate to the tiny form in the little bed. It was as the presence of another world which first had hovered over, and then had entered into ours.

If such be true in the common daily life of men and women in every age, is it any wonder that they called it, and that we still call it, "The Holy Night," when the Lord from Heaven came into life robed in our flesh? But His coming was only a first step. He remained. He was to be known as Emmanuel, "God with us."

The Babe of the Bethlehem manger lifted up His eyes to a mother's face. He grew in body, in strength and beauty and "the grace of God was upon Him." He opened His heart and received into it every experience of joy or sadness that human flesh is heir to. He was even "Tempted in all points like as we are yet" (thank God) "without sin." He accepted men's sorrow; He bore their sicknesses; He died for their sins. He arose from the grave and offered life and immortality to every brother man, however lowly. He taught us that life's law was love and its glory, service.

Oh, not the wonder of His coming only--but the wonder of His being--this is the message of Christmas. Tell me not simply that the angels sang one clear night above the Bethlehem hills, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will," but tell me that the strain has never ceased and keeps singing itself on and on through man's redemption.

So truly did Jesus come into human life that Christmas

morning that although the years passed and He at last, as have our fathers all, entered through the gates of death, yet returned He, leaving those gates unbarred forever and pointing beyond them to the shining way of life eternal. He lived our life, in our way, but in all its fullness. He conquered the evil of the human heart and lifted it from sin into life, from the shadows of a passing day into the light of the never ending years, from the earthbound flesh to the Heaven freed soul.

Though He ascended to His Father and to ours, yet His promise was to abide forever and to go with His disciples to the ends of the earth and to the ends of time.

So the Babe of the Bethlehem manger is the Christ of today, Son of God, Son of Man, so becoming, so remaining, my Saviour and Master and Friend, and this is what Christmas means to me. Tell me friend, and tell me friends,--

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU?

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C H R I S T M A S

C hristmas comes again.

H eaven gives its priceless Gift

R eminding us again of matchless Love,

I nspiring us to seek the Truth.

S aviour, Lord, Redeemer of mankind,

T riumphant over life and death,

M aster of our hearts and minds and souls,

A s we receive Him and obey.

S o may Christmas come to you.

--Mildred Long.

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THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

The month of December challenges a look into the significance of the Christmas Season. Indeed it is a joy to dedicate this issue to the overwhelming number of Christians throughout the world. They largely support the unique work of Fellowship in Prayer and, without hesitation, we pay homage to the power and growth of the Christian faith.

But the influence of Christianity has touched innumerable lives beyond the bounds of its adherents. Its beneficent power has reached the remotest corners of mankind's activities and blessed them and, by and large, it has been welcomed. Truly, as the "rain falleth on the just and the unjust" so has Christianity cast its influence.

However, it has been commercialized and abused by those who would profit from its popularity, particularly the Christmas Season, which has been stretched over months of pre-Christmas advertising. Those who have no sympathy with the Christian religion are eager to share in the profits of the season. Indeed, unusual is the enterprise which is not touched by the business of Christmas. So, what was brought to the world by Christ as a gift of love, life and light has grown into a demonstration of materialism, excluding those minorities where the primal spirit still prevails. Thus, a revival within the Christian Church of its original principles seems necessary to attain a regenerated world, toward which we aim.

It seems strange that the simplicity of the teachings of Jesus to the peoples of His day, and preserved in the gospels, should have lost much of their mighty appeal as they were reinterpreted down through the years. It is quite possible that the conclusion of a friend is right when he attributes "the failure to the decreased emphasis upon giving." He continues: "Christianity, to be true to its principles, is a giving of life and not of withholding." Surely there are plenty of Jesus' utterances to substantiate this. And there are plenty of experiences brought to attention to demonstrate how the law of giving works.

A woman living in Illinois sold her property and moved to Florida. She had ample income from common stock, so she thought, to live comfortably--but came the depression and her stock income was cut nearly to nil. In her distress, she con-

fided her troubles to an invalid aunt in Pennsylvania who wrote: "You are thinking of starving when God *WILL* supply abundantly, if you will trust Him. You are thinking of getting instead of giving. Give! Give! Give!"

The day that letter arrived she had two slices of bread in the house and no money to buy more. But as she read the letter again, there came a knock at the door, and there stood an old man begging for food. With no money, he had walked far from town and was returning home, farther on down the road, to his sick wife, as his search for work had been fruitless. Under the spell of the letter, she decided to give him the two slices of bread, blessing the gift with a prayer. Hardly had he gone when a neighbor knocked and came in with a whole loaf of bread saying, "From my morning's baking." The following morning came an unexpected $10 dividend check. This was shared with the old couple down the road. The third morning, brought a fifty dollar check from a brother, - a belated birthday gift - something he had never done before. This was the beginning of experiences which completely changed this person's life. She is now beyond eighty years of age but joyous and happy in her giving.

A wealthy woman missed a "favorite saleslady" in a fashionable store. Investigation revealed that, for a long time, the worker had been nursing an incurable disease and was very ill. The woman of means provided all expenses until after death, but found a new channel for service whereby her life is filled with joy and peace.

A friend of limited means *loaned* $5.00 to a person caught in a distressing situation. Nevertheless, it was given in the spirit of helpfulness rather than an expected return. Within four months severe illness struck this friend's family entailing extra expenditures. But, from a totally unexpected source came above a thousand dollars--more than enough to meet the extra needs. Verily whosoever giveth a cup of water in Christ's name "shall not lose his reward."

Even wisdom, experienced in the light of God's truth, is reflected in Proverbs 11:24. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet but it tendeth to poverty."

So, the real enjoyment of the message of Christmas rests with each individual in the *Spirit of Giving*. To give rightly opens the doors for the God of Love to enter.

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MRS. GRENVILLE KLEISER

Our October issue announced the death of one of our strongest supporters in the person of Grenville Kleiser. He was survived by his beloved wife, Elizabeth Margaret Thompson, who went to Oregon to spend her remaining days among her own relatives. However, she had not long to bear the separation from Grenville as she passed away on October 26, 1953 and the remains were brought East to rest beside those of her husband.

One can hardly lament her quick following of Grenville and it seems fitting that it should so be. Through many, many years of close companionship and work together, they had reached the end of their days here on earth and it was God's will to call them both home. May the memory and influence of these dear people live on and on.

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A P P R E C I A T I O N

Without so planning, the "Light of Life" has emerged as the focal thought in this issue of FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER.

To our Contributing Editors, and also to the contributors of articles appearing in this issue, we extend best wishes and sincere thanks.

LET EACH WITHIN HIS HEART A TEMPLE BUILD WHERE NO MAN IS A STRANGER - *Sarobyn*	*By* courtesy of ASIA CALLING and Sara Robbins *(Observed by Miss Dorothy G. Anderson).*
LISTEN, A LIGHT!	- By A. E. Johnson.
CREATIVE SILENCE and CHRISTMAS	- Mildred Long.
WHAT CHRISTMAS MEANS TO ME	- By George William Wright (now deceased - a former missionary to the Philippines) *By courtesy of his wife, Anna Rogers Wright.*
ST. LOUIS CHRISTMAS CAROLERS	- By courtesy of Mr. Wm. H. Danforth.
A PRAYER	- By Mabel C. Burlingham.
THE NEW YEAR'S ROAD	- By Ae'lis Churchill Chaphe.

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NOTICES

The Executive Secretary acknowledges with deep gratitude the many messages and evidences of friendship received during his recent hospitalization and convalescence of eleven weeks. Also high praise is due the Board's Secretary and the staff for carrying on so efficiently.

The Jewish Feast of the Dedication known as "The Festival of Lights" (Channukah) began this year (5714) on December 2nd and was celebrated for eight days.

A very appropriate book for the season - although its contents are for all-time living - is David Dunn's TRY GIVING YOURSELF AWAY. The author promises great happiness *NOW* and proves his point. Price $2.50 - The Updegraff Press, Ltd., Scarsdale, N. Y.

American business this year has contributed an estimated $5,000,000 to promote religion through advertising on bill boards, bus cards, newspapers or radio. The current theme, as announced through the organization of Religion in American Life is "Light Their Life With Faith."

There is continued expansion in the list of subscribers to FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER. The contacts with all faiths appeal to many deeply spiritual people.

The objective is a spiritual regeneration expressed in the Incorporation as follows:

> *"To promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind."*

The subscription rate for FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER is $2.00 annually. Larger sums are gratefully received for broadening and carrying on the program. Visitors are always welcome.

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THE NEW YEAR'S ROAD

The portals stand open before us
  And a fair white road I see
Stretching ahead in the distance
  Waiting for you and me . . .

Let's make it a beautiful road, dear,
  Where others will want to go
Where the roses of love shall blossom
  And the lilies of Peace shall grow.

For many will walk beside us
  Bearing a heavy load
Which our hands will help to lighten
  As we walk the New Year's road.

So let's give of our love and comfort
  Like the fragrance of lily and rose
To those who like us are waiting
  As the New Year's portals unclose.

--Ae'lis Churchill Chaphe.

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